

REMARKSSummary of the Office Action.

Claims 1-34, 36-49, 57, and 63-78 are pending in this application.

These claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious from Bertagna et al. U. S patent No. 5,057,677 ("Bertagna") in view of one or more U.S. Patents: claims 1, 2, 10, 13, 14, 16-18, 31, 33, 39, 43, 44, 47, 48, 57, 64-69, 72, 73, 75, and 76 in view of Sherman et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,189,788 ("Sherman"); claims 3-5 and 38 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Miller U.S. Patent No. 5,202,825 ("Miller"); claims 6 and 40 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Swartz et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,594,228 ("Swartz"); claims 7, 8, 11, 12, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29, 32, 34, 36, 41, 42, 68, 70 and 77 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Modiano et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,670,768 ("Modiano"); claims 9 and 46 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Postrel et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,003,008 ("Postrel"); claims 15, 37 and 71 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Ju U.S. Patent No. 5,811,774 ("Ju"); claims 19, 49 and 78 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Talati et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,903,878 ("Talati"); claim 22 in view of Sherman and Modiano, and further in view of Ju; claim 25 in view of Sherman and Modiano, and further in view of Miller and Swartz; claim 26 in view of Sherman, and Modiano, and further in view of Bernard et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,918,213 (Bernard"); claim 27 in view of Sherman, and Modiano, and further in view of Postrel; claim 30 in view of Sherman and Modiano, and further in view of Talati; claims 45 and 74 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Bernard; claim 63 in view of Sherman, and further in view of Saliga U.S. Patent No. 5,397,884 ("Saliga").

Applicants' Reply

Applicants respectfully traverse the prior art rejections.

Claims 1-34, 36-49, 57, and 63-78

Claims 1-34, 36-49, 57, and 63-78 are directed toward applicants' inventive tendering service stations or computer systems that include, for example, movable housing/stations and detachable terminals which are in radio communication with a remote computer. The tendering stations can be used by retail establishments to conduct customer transactions.

Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 31, 57, 63, 64, and 65 to clarify the invention. Claim 20 has been rewritten so that it now depends from claim 1.

In response to applicants' arguments filed March 18, 2004, the Examiner kindly notes that "the features which the applicants rely upon (i.e., radio communication) are not recited in the rejected claims." Accordingly, applicants have now amended claims independent 1, 31, 57, 63, 64 and 65 so that they explicitly recite that communications are "via wireless radio." Further, claim 20 has been rewritten so that it now depends from claim 1.

Independent claims 1, 31, 57, 64 and 65

Independent claims 1, 31, 57, 64 and 65 were rejected as being obvious from Bertagna in view of Sherman.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references Bertagna and Sherman, whether taken individually or in combination, do not show all the features of the applicants' inventive tendering service stations or systems. For example, the cited references do not show a tendering or service station in which magnetic stripe card information read by a reader and responses to the card information are "are transmitted via wireless radio over said wireless communication network to said external central computer"

As the Examiner has noted, Bertagna fails to teach a portable transaction unit in wireless [radio] communication with an external central computer (06/04/2004 Office Action, Section 3, page 3).

Further, Sherman describes a printer/output terminal cart for a portable data collection unit. Sherman's printer/output terminal is mounted on a movable cart, which also has a docking module for receiving the portable data collection unit. The portable data collection unit is mechanically reinserted in the docking module for electrical contact, when it is desired to print the collected data. Applicants note that Sherman's printer/output terminal cart is a conventional printing arrangement except in that it is portable or mobile. Sherman's printer/output terminal accepts output "passively." Sherman does not show peripheral devices that are useful for conducting retail customer transactions. In particular, Sherman fails to show peripheral devices that are involved in generating as well as receiving transaction information, which is communicated via wireless radio to and from an external computer.

Thus, both Bertagna and Sherman fail to show, teach or suggest, a tendering or customer service station in which magnetic stripe card information read by a reader and responses to the card information are transmitted via wireless radio to an external computer as required by claims 1, 31, 57, 64 and 65.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 31, 57, 64 and 65 are patentable over the cited references. Further, dependent claims 2-30, 32-34, 36-49 and 66-78 are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims they depend from are patentable.

Claim 63

Claim 63 relates to method for controlling functions available to mobile terminal users in a system in which a host processor communicates via radio with a mobile terminal, which is issued to a user. The method includes receiving identification data specific to the user to whom the terminal is issued and communicating the received identification data to the host processor via wireless radio. In response, the host processor determines authorized functions that can be made available to the terminal user. A list of authorized functions is communicated via radio to the terminal where the user can select to activate certain functions. The host processor activates the selected functions at the terminal.

Claim 63 has been rejected as being obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the combination Bertagna, Sherman and Saliga. The Examiner notes that Bertagna and Sherman disclose a tendering station but fail to teach or suggest that the tendering station determines an authorization hierarchy. However, the Examiner states that Saliga teaches a key containing an access code, which determines the level of access granted to the key holder, and therefore claim 63 is obvious (Office Action section 9 page 15).

Applicants respectfully disagree. First, there is no suggestion to combine Saliga with the other two cited references. Second, as previously submitted, claim 63 clearly relates to a method for controlling functions available to users of "mobile terminals" in response to specific identification data entered on the mobile terminals. The only mobile component in Saliga is the "room keys" issued to hotel guests. The functions available to the hotel guests are predetermined by Saliga's "fixed" host computer/controller (32) and not by the users of "mobile" room keys" (i.e. hotel guests). Access to the "fixed" host computer/controller (32) is controlled by Saliga's scheme of desk clerk/hotel manager passwords and not by the hotel guest to whom the key is issued. There is no suggestion in Saliga that the "mobile" room keys have any means for data input by the "mobile" room key users (i.e., hotel guests) as required by claim 63.

Further unlike claim 63, Saliga does not involve using radio communications to transmit hotel guest identification directly from the issued key to a host computer, or involve a host computer which in response to user identification data received via radio transmits a list of authorized functions to the terminal for selective activation by the user.

Thus, the elements of claim 63 are not shown by the cited references even if they are viewed in combination.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection of claim 63 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 1-34, 36-39, 57, and 63-78 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. If there are any remaining issues to be resolved, applicants request that the Examiner

kindly contact the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview in order to advance the prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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